

The President's Daily Brief

21 August 1969

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VIETNAM

A commentary in yesterday's issue of Hanoi's party newspaper Nhan Dan took a tough line on the subject of negotiations. Nhan Dan argued that continued US support for the Thieu government, "intensification" of the war, and the Vietnamization program all demonstrate that the US is trying to prolong the war and partition Vietnam permanently, rather than negotiate a settlement.

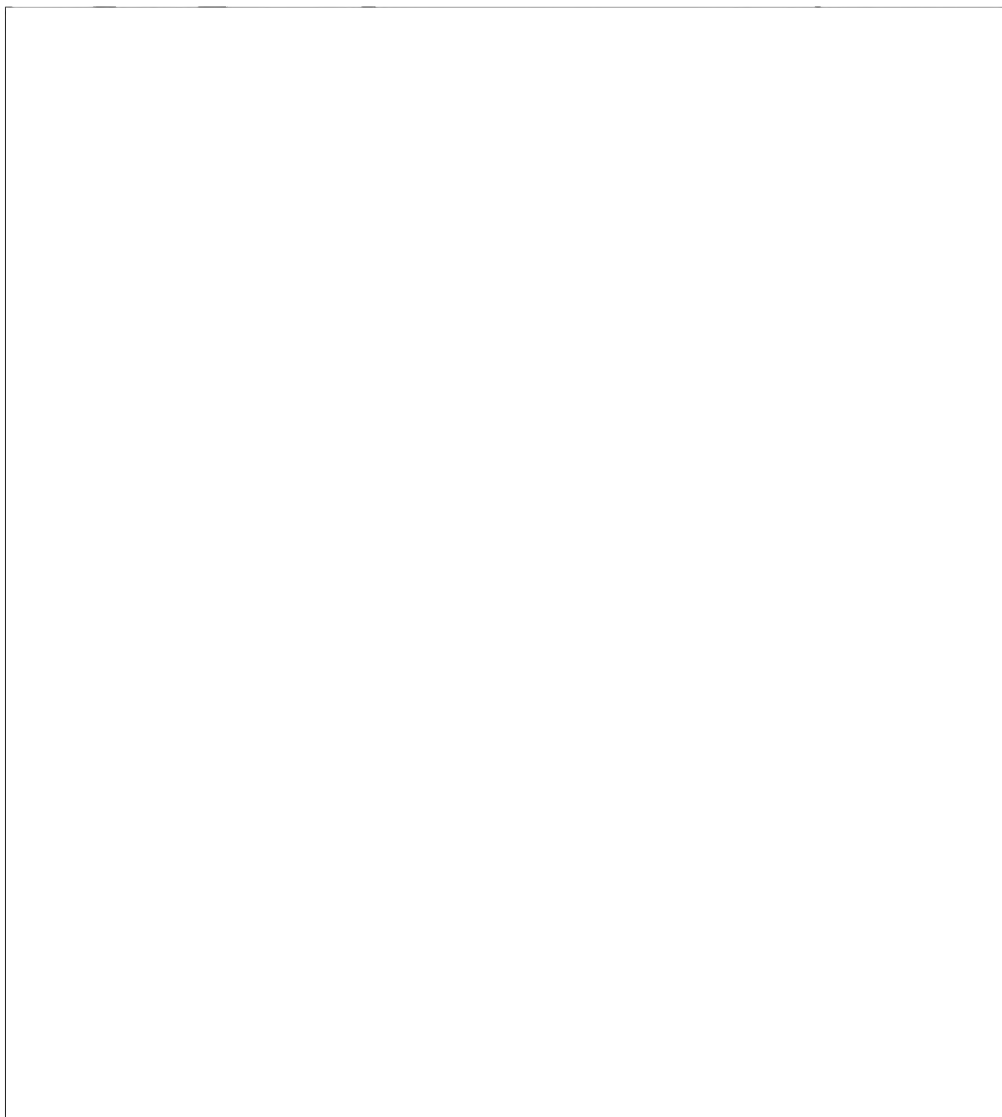
Nhan Dan's uncompromising line is readily apparent in such assertions as that the US "must" unconditionally pull out forces, that a provisional government "must" be set up to organize elections, and that the elections "must" be held after US troops have been completely withdrawn.

Articles of this kind are often nothing more than rhetorical posturing and do not necessarily offer a good guide to Hanoi's intentions. The line taken by Nhan Dan fits other current evidence, however, that the Communists have--for the moment at least--dug their heels deeply into a rigid interpretation of their ten-point program. Presumably they are hoping that the current round of military activity and the deadlock in Paris eventually will rebuild pressures on the US to make additional concessions.

SOVIET AFFAIRS

Recent satellite photography shows that construction of two new groups of ten launchers each began this summer at existing SS-11 complexes. By the end of 1971, when all

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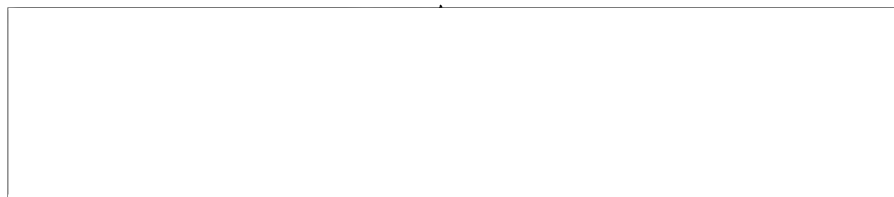
SS-11 groups now identified are completed, there will be 810 operational SS-11 launchers. There are now about 630 operational SS-11 silos.

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MIDDLE EAST



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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

For the most part, demonstrators in Prague and elsewhere have avoided violence. The workers in Prague are staging a "walk-to-work" protest today, leaving busses and streetcars all but deserted. A continuation of "passive resistance" will not threaten police control, although an unforeseen incident may trigger sporadic disorders.

The government press is stepping up its attacks on Dubcek, apparently in an effort to discredit him and his government completely.

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INDIA

Prime Minister Gandhi's most recent success, the election of V. V. Giri as president, will make it all the easier for her to chip away further at the old guard which controls much of the Congress Party organization. She may attempt, fairly soon, to unload party president Mijalingappa--the chief Congress Party backer of Giri's opponent.

President Giri and Mrs. Gandhi probably will cooperate closely, particularly on any decision to form a new government or to call new elections. She can also count on the support of the Congress Party parliamentarians who backed Giri.

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